

From: aewhite

Affiliation:

Address: 2330 - 43rd ave east
seattle, Washington, 98112

Comment:

Northeast NPR-A Planning Area

Dear Northeast Planning Area,

001
General

I am writing to you today URGING you to protect the Teshekpuk Lake and other important wildlife areas in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska by going back and offering a new alternative that protects more special fish, wildlife and subsistence hunting areas and includes more protective stipulations. At the very least, the BLM should adopt Alternative A, the "No Action" Alternative.

2

The new plan for the Northeast area of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska proposes to open 96% of the area to oil and gas development and reduce protections for critical wildlife habitat of Teshekpuk Lake by 75%. This is a complete reversal of Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) 1998 plan, in which 87% of the planning area is open to leasing and 600,000 acres are off limits around Teshekpuk Lake to protect important habitat and subsistence use for caribou and waterfowl.

003
General

The majority of scientific evidence indicates that significant impacts could occur to fish and wildlife if more of this area is opened to oil development. Teshekpuk Lake and its surrounding wetlands is a vital tundra-wetland complex in the circumpolar Arctic that is home to thousands of waterfowl and caribou. Tens of thousands of birds, including brant, greater white-fronted geese, Canada and snow geese gather in the Teshekpuk wetland system to molt their flight feathers and are thus vulnerable to human disturbances.

004
General

Additionally, coming to nest in this area with few predators are thousands of birds, including the threatened spectacled eider listed under the Endangered Species Act. These species will also suffer from the increased number of predators, such as gulls, ravens and foxes that are attracted to oil fields.

005
General

Also, the 45,000-animal Teshekpuk Lake Caribou Herd will be threatened by such development. Each year, the herd migrates to the Teshekpuk Lake area to calve and escape from insects. If caribou are forced to move to less desirable habitats, calving numbers could decline, reducing the population and greatly impacting many Alaska Natives who depend on the herd as a subsistence resource.

006
General

Instead of opening up more of the area to leasing and oil and gas development, the BLM should provide a more balanced, science-based approach to energy development and environmental protection by permanently protecting the Teshekpuk Lake and Colville River Special Areas and strengthening monitoring and lease stipulation requirements. At a very minimum, the BLM should adopt Alternative A, the "No Action" Alternative, which retains current protections for the critical fish and wildlife habitats around Teshekpuk Lake.

Website Comment **106114**

106114 (Cont'd)

From: aewhite

Affiliation:

Address: 2330 - 43rd ave east
seattle, Washington, 98112

Sincerely,

ae white
2330 - 43rd ave east
seattle, Washington 9811

Attached: None